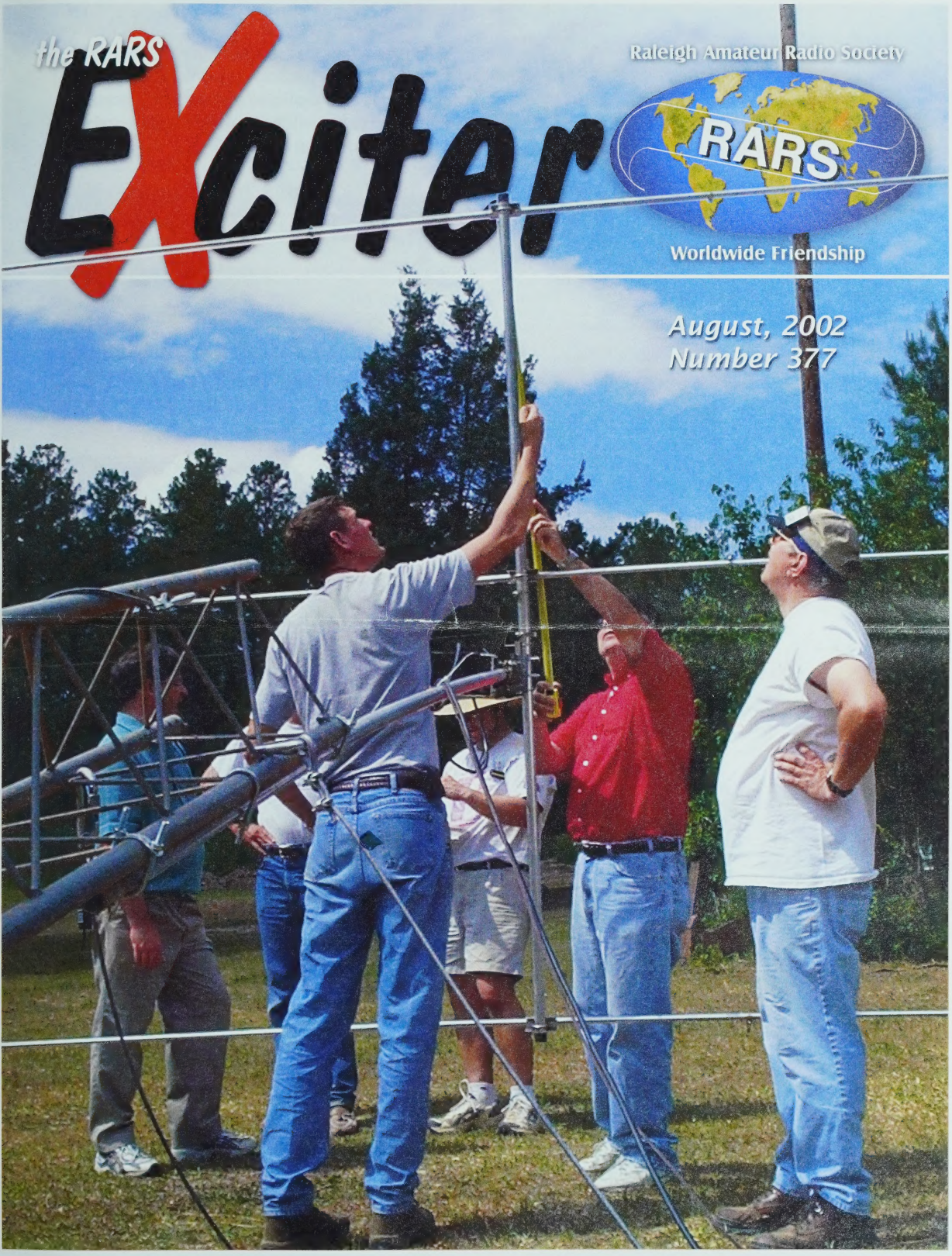
the RARS Exciter

Raleigh Amateur Radio Society

RARS

Worldwide Friendship

August, 2002
Number 377



The Exciter

The ***Exciter*** is the monthly newsletter of the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society. It is available in both printed and electronic form.
The printed version is mailed to members just before each club meeting. The electronic form, in Adobe Acrobat PDF format, is e-mailed about a week earlier.

We solicit both articles and advertising. The deadline for submissions is the 15th of the prior month. Contact the Editor.

The views contained in the Exciter are those of the individual authors, and are not necessarily the views of the Editor, or the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society.

The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society

The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society, Inc. (RARS) was founded in 1969 and continues to serve and support the Amateur Radio community in the greater Triangle area. In 1999, we incorporated a new RARS, and obtained 501(c)(3) Non-Profit tax status.

The objectives of the club are to promote worldwide friend-ship through Amateur Radio; to be of public service by
providing radio communications in times of disaster, emergency, or civic need; to educate members in radio technique; and to provide training classes to assist in obtaining Amateur Radio licenses.

Anyone interested in Amateur Radio is eligible to apply for membership. Dues for regular licensed amateurs are $18.00 per year (from July 1 through June 30). Additional immediate family members pay $5.00 each per year. Dues for licensed amateurs older than 59 or younger than 16 are $12.00 per year. Dues for non-licensed Associate members are $9.00 per year.

Applications for membership may be obtained from the treasurer, or the RARS web site (www.rars.org).

Officers

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Info

Repeaters:
145.13
146.64
224.64
444.525 (88.5 PL)

Web Site:
http://www.rars.org

It's time again for membership renewals. The website has the application at www.rars.org. An application is also available at the RARS meeting. Membership cards will be available upon request. We hope to see you at the meeting.

NEXT RARS MEETING:
Tuesday, August 6th

COMING EVENTS

Pigskin Preview
Coordinator: Dick Orlander KD4ISC
Date: August 17, 2002
Time: 7:30 am - 10:30 am

Duke Liver Triathalon
Coordinator: Bill Cole KG4CXY
Date: Sept. 14, 2002
Time: 6:30 am - 12:00 midnight

MS-150
Coordinator: Bob Breyer K1RCB
Date: Sept. 14 & 15, 2002
Time: 6:30am—4:00 pm

Duke Liver Half Ironman Triathalon
Coordinator: Eric Haywood KG4CXW
Date: Sept 29, 2002
Time: 7:30am

Leukemia & Lymphoma Society - Light the Night Walks
Event Coordinator: Karl Ulrich K4LNX
Date: Sept. 19 & 21, 2002
Time: 5:30 pm

CCFA EVENT ON JUNE 1, 2002
By Joe WA2UZO

Amateur Radio Operators once again helped provide communications to the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America's (CCFA) Run and Walk for Research on June 1st in RTP. This fund-raising event has been a staple for coordinator WA2UZO for over 7 years and has been one of the Hams for at least 4. Not only do the Hams provide communications and SAG support, but we also work with an internal communications group that allows us to speak directly with event managers on business band radios. On the Ham side we used a cross-band repeat setup in a vehicle on the top of a parking garage at the event location. Net control used 440MHz and the other Hams on the course used the 2 meter side. This allows everyone to use low power and communicate effectively through net control. EMS and County Sheriff Deputies were also on-site during the event. Shirts and hot dogs were available at the event as well! This year we had an excellent crew of (somewhat soggy) volunteers: KG4AWG, KG4CXW, KG4HDT, KF4ZMV, W4NOT, KG4FIQ, KE4ZNS and KN4AQ keeping an eye on the doppler for us!

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Minutes of the RARS May Board Meeting - May 21, 2002

The monthly Board meeting of the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society was held at the Forest Hills Baptist Church on May 21. The meeting was called to order by President Bernard Blackmon W4BRB at 7:30 PM. Members present were: W4BRB, KG4CXR, KG4FIJ, K4HF, K4HM, AB4OZ, KE4PAX, K1RCB, NI4S, KF4UQZ, WA2UZO, AC4ZO. The total attendance was 16.

On motion by K4HM and second by KA2FWC, the April 2002 Board Meeting minutes were approved.

Committee Reports:

FM Committee - W4BRB reported that the tower grounding project will be done soon and will cost $600.00, which will be paid for out of the current budget. American Tower has been good to work with. KA2FWC reported no change in the status of the new repeater and controller... will try to find out more. W4BRB reported an opportunity to use the D.H. Hill tower at NC State for possible relocation of the 145.13 repeater. Question was asked by a board member about a repeater at RTP. W4BRB said that due to lack of suitable site, this will remain a possible future project.

Exciter - New editor is Denyse KG4CXR, and first new issue (May 2002) is published. Discussion ensued about the publishing timeline. Microsoft Publisher software was purchased for $160.00 for the editor to use for creating the Exciter. This will be paid for out of the new (2002-2003) budget. KE4PAX recommended member list with expiration dates be published in the next issue. Also brought up for discussion what bulk mailing permit we should use, our own or use the donated services of High Performance Marketing. After discussion it was decided to have Gary KN4AQ bring it before the next general membership meeting.

KE4PAX gave us the report that we have a total of 320 members.

KE4PAX presented the final version of the 2002-2003 budget to the Board. After review and discussion, motion was made to approve by AC4ZO, seconded by K4HM. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously. The approved budget will be presented at the June general membership meeting.

VP Report - K1RCB reported the RARS table at the Hamfest earned about $260.00. This money was used for the purchase of three GPS units. The program at the next general meeting will be an EOC/Hurricane season update. Reminded everyone about the Hurricane Preparedness Fair on June 29th at the Lowe's on Glenwood Ave.

Net Manager - KF4UQZ had no report.

Web Master - WA2UZO reported that Field Day info is posted on the web page. Announced a CCFA Public Service Race on June 1st at RTP. Hamfest calendar will be posted on the web page.

Member Services - KG4CXR reported that membership cards will be produced on an as-requested basis in the future due to a large number of prepared cards that have not been picked up. KE4PAX said he could modify the membership application form to include a box to be checked if the member wants a card.

Hamfest - K4HM reported the event was a success. Photos have been posted on the website. Attempt will be made to secure all committee heads for next year's event.

Field Day: W4BRB reported that Neal N4HAF is doing a fine job of planning. He still needs two band captains.

Public Information - No report.
Education: No Report

Public Service - K1RCB gave an update on the MS-150 scheduled for Sept 14-15.

VE Team - No report.

ARRL Liaison - K4HF reported ARRL was well represented at the Dayton Hamvention. He reviewed some of the pending ham-related legislation that ARRL is lobbying for in Washington, particularly a house bill related to antenna covenants. He gave a recommendation for the ARRL letter, which is sent via e-mail each Friday.

W4DW/W4RNC Trustee - AC4ZO had no report.

Old Business

Special Ad Hoc Committee for Equipment - AC4ZO reported three Alinco DR-135TP radios were purchased for $850.00, along with three APRS units for $240.00. Still need to purchase some adapters, which will cost approximately $25.00. Plans to have these APRS setups fully operational by Field Day.

New Business

W4BRB clarified and reiterated the 9:30 PM building curfew for our meetings.

KE4PAX informed that a financial review must be scheduled. W4BRB appointed KG4FIJ , K4HF, KE4PAX, and AC4ZO to the Financial Review Team.

W4BRB asked that any New Business items be e-mailed to him a couple of days prior to future meetings to allow him time to prepare.

Member Comments

KE4PAX inquired about purchasing a digital camera for Club use (mainly for the Exciter). After discussion it was decided that there are enough privately-owned cameras in the Club so it would not be necessary to make this purchase.

KG4CXR expressed her pleasure at being appointed as Exciter Editor.

On motion by AC4ZO, the meeting was adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Jim Walter KG4FIJ, Secretary.

NET REPORTS FOR MAY 2002

- 8:00PM DAILY: RARS Evening Net
- 9:00PM MON: SWL SIG
- 8:30PM SAT : Tech & Traders net

Total Net Activity:
Minutes: 763 in 33 sessions
Check-Ins: 452
Traffic : 42 brought 30 passed

LADIES WEEKEND OUT

It all started with just an idea that bloomed into reality. How about a ladies' weekend to the beach. Liz KF4UQZ had just the plan and the rest of us were all for it. Marian K1MRB, Anne KG4SWF and Denyse KG4CXR made plans that on June 1 we'd head for Emerald Isle.

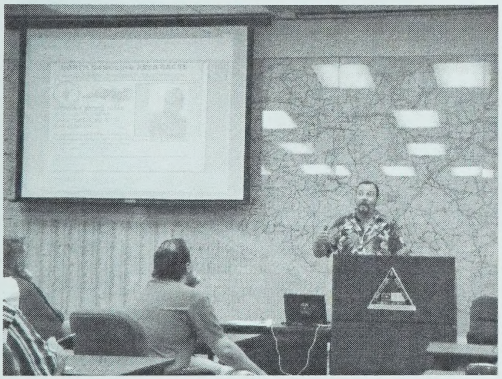
Early Saturday morning at 7:30, Anne went to Denyse's resident and then on to Liz's. After filling up the car, Liz drove to Emerald Isle and by noon we were all settled in at the beach location. The afternoon sped by with walking the beach and just taking in the sunshine.

Saturday night, we had a couple surprises. First, there was a big storm that was shooting beautiful strikes of lighting on both sides of us. On the left was the sound and on the right was the ocean. Strikes and designs were everywhere. We sat in the darkness of the trailer watching the "light show." No human could duplicate it.

Liz KF4UQZ Emptying water from previous nights storm.

The second surprise was how well we were able to get into the repeaters both, 146.64 and 146.88. It was as if we were still in our living rooms in Raleigh. Everyone we talked to was so clear and all of us were surprised.

Sunday was a lazy day by the beach, chatting and listening for anyone we could find in the local area and in Raleigh on the ham radio. Nothing was heard but a lot of static. We decided to get home before dark so left about 3:30. It was a great wonderful weekend and all of us hope to do it again.



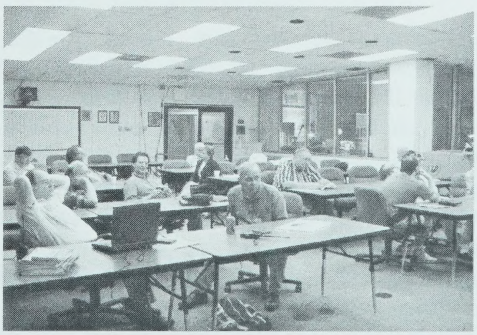
John KG4HDT

WAKE ARES MEETING HELD ON JUNE 1, 2002

By Mary KG4OQA

Wake ARES held a general meeting at the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in Raleigh, NC, led by John Guerriero KG4HDT, Emergency Coordinator (EC) for North Carolina Emergency Management. The group discussed several current and upcoming issues. John gave an overview of ARES and the sections within North Carolina. He also gave a report to the group about recent Simulated Emergency Test (SET) that was done with Onslow County involving a possible bio-terrorist threat. This exercise proved to be a great success in demonstrating the capabilities and commitment of amateur operators.

Tom N4TAB discussed in detail the 30 amp Anderson PowerPole connector and our plans for implementing it as a statewide standard. Other topics included the new ARRL Emergency Communications Courses (ARECC) that are offered on-line; possible name changes for the Wake ARES Thursday night net as it serves a multi-county ARES community and not just Wake County; and recognition of the efforts of many of those present. Ronnie Reams WA4MJF is a recent appointed Official Emergency Station (OES). Mark Gibson N4MQU reported he is updating the Wake ARES membership list and will be contacting members for more information soon.



ARES Group

Photos by Vince KF4ZMV

The RARS Web Site: An Inside Look

By Joe WA2UZO

The way the story was relayed to me was that since I didn't show up for a RARS Board Meeting I was "kinda voted in" to write a column about the RARS web site for The Exciter. Needless to say I won't be missing any more Board Meetings! (sic)

I took responsibility for the site about a year ago and was charged with making sense of it all. There was a lot of great information out there but it needed some organization and a little clean-up. I went right to work designing a new logo and a "style sheet" to make the site look clean and respond quickly to the user - not a lot of graphics or extraneous gunk.

Once I got things looking decent, and structured behind the scenes how I wanted them, I started "automating the heck out of it." The goal was (and still is) to automate as much of the site as possible to keep it alive and useful. There are so many sites out there that are stagnant, this wasn't going to be one of them.

Many examples of this vitality can be seen on the main page of the site. Using server-parsed HTML, a little JavaScript and PHP (a wonderfully elegant programming language) you always know the current day and date, what nets are coming up tonight, when the next RARS meeting will be and what the topic is, when the news page was last updated, a useful tip and more. These are all things that had to be manually updated before automation!

Speaking of the news page...It used to be that I had to put news up on the site and then once the news was out-of-date I would have to go back in and move it to the archive. No more - the news is automated now! I simply create a text file on the server containing the news, the date it was posted and the date it expires. The news page (and the news archive page) work in tandem to display the proper stories based on their expiration date. I cut my work in half with a few lines of code!

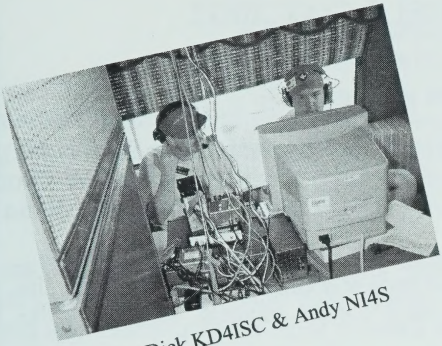
Another feature of the news page that I just added in the past few weeks is a direct news feed from the ARRL. Each time you view the news page the very first story you see contains the 5 latest General Bulletin headlines from the ARRL. You can easily see the date and topic and click the link to view the entire bulletin. This is updated dynamically each time the page is loaded!

The calendar is another dynamic page. Whenever you view the calendar you always see this month plus the next 2 with the current day highlighted. Any items that the calendar "knows about" are displayed. Recurring items are easy since the calendar can easily calculate when the 1st Tuesday of the month is (for the RARS meeting, for example). One-time items are also displayed on the calendar such as hamfests, public service events, etc.

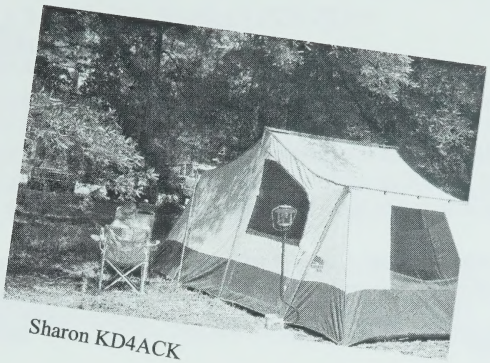
I'm constantly working on improving the site while keeping it simple and fast! A club member made a comment to me at the last meeting about how he liked the site because it was so clean that he could get to what he wanted easily without much hassle. This was great to hear because that is always my goal and it's good when I can make someone's visit easier because of it.

If you have any suggestions for data feeds that need to be on the site, please let me know - I'm always looking for interesting and useful things to implement.

TECH/TRADER NET
8:30 PM SATURDAY ON 146. 64
TWO NETS IN ONE!



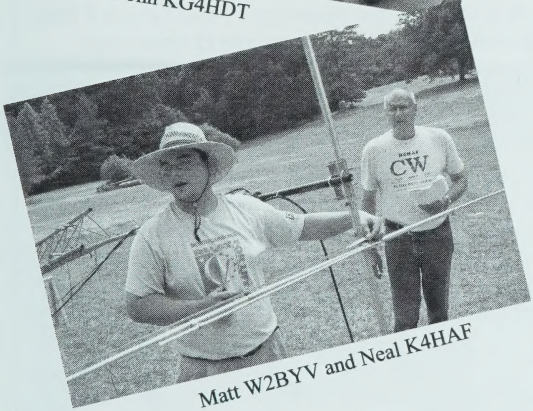
Dick KD4ISC & Andy NI4S



Sharon KD4ACK

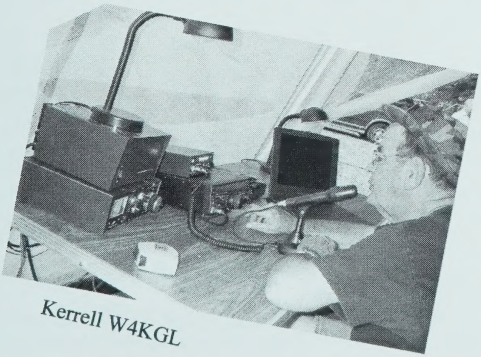
John KG4HDT

Sharon KD4ACK background
Mike WA4BPJ Joey KE4DRJ



Matt W2BYV and Neal K4HAF

Bill KG4CXY



Kerrell W4KGL

FIELD DAY 2002

Front Cover: Setup for 10 meter station
David KF4VXJ—in blue shirt
Kerrell W4KGL in white tee shirt and jeans
Matt W2BYV in red shirt
Paul N4YGU in white jersey and jeans
Mike Mollet N2SRO in grey shirt

Photos by Vince KF4ZMV

ADVENTURES IN 20M CW AT FIELD DAY 2002

By Bill KG4CXY

This year was my first experience being a Field Day captain. What an experience!

The first impression I take away from the event is how much I used to take for granted the work involved in being a band captain. Making sure that the radios, generator, and all the supporting materials were in place was a major job. I was ready for a day off after setting up. But then the fun really starts!

Just before kick off, I was starting to congratulate myself on station preparations when someone walked up and asked, "where's your Beam". I pointed to both a dipole and vertical antenna(s) I had set up for the station. They just snickered. "You're really going to have to work hard to make contacts," they said walking away.

And work we did. I had no idea how critical the directivity of a beam antenna could be for contest pileups. Adding to our challenges was a solar flare event, which had the 20 Meter band warbling and fading like 6 meters.

I am by no means a CW speed rocket. Fortunately Neal, (our Field Day chair) teamed me up with Johnny Mayfield WA9SZL. Johnny is an amazing guy! He can send 30 wpm CW with his left or right hand, with a bug or straight key, or with both hands simultaneously. For me it was a real clinic in CW operating skill. For the majority of the event, Johnny would run the rig and I would log. (My major contribution being to help untangle a call sign here or there.)

About midnight things started getting a little weird. We had two mares sharing the south pasture of the Carrol ranch with our station. As the night wore on they took a shine to our operation. I don't know if they liked listening to the CW, or whether Johnny was emitting Horse pheremones. A couple of times they turned around and passed gas into the tent. Johnny would cock a look at me and say "Must be love…"

Things went progressively downhill at that point.

I can only take credit for 2% of the total QSOs for our operation. The lion's share of the QSOs worked were by Johnny. Most folks were mildly surprised when we turned in our point totals (over 1500). I guess we did well considering our antenna setup and a novice band captain. Honorable mention also needs to go to the phantom CW operator who helped us out at the end of the event. Johnny and I had no relief crew, and had to operate around the clock (with one brief nap). A Saint of a gentleman (who's name and callsign I misplaced) came in with about 1.5 hours to go and gave us a break. Whoever you are – Johnny and I are in your debt!

Important to mention is that were it not for the help of Liz and Walter Stanley, I would have died of heat stroke in the Carrol's South '40 during teardown. Fortunately I did survive. (I found my will to live just thinking about being buried with those Horses.)

My litmus for measuring how good of a time I've had is how long it takes to recover from the event. Since it took three days to recover from this, I have to rate it a 10!

Tuesday after Field Day (as I'm recovering normal use of my extremities), the phone rings. It's Neal calling to tell me "Now you're <u>really</u> ready to be band captain on 20M CW for next year…"

Can't wait.

The ARRL Letter Vol. 21, No. 25 June 21, 2002
White House Greets Amateur Radio Operators

President George W. Bush has sent his greetings to all Amateur Radio operators, acknowledging their role in emergency communications and in generating international goodwill. The White House letter came as hams in the US marked Amateur Radio week June 17-23 and got ready to participate in ARRL Field Day—an emergency preparedness exercise.

"I salute amateur radio operators for your work on behalf of public safety officials, " the President said. "I also commend your interest in communicating with persons in other parts of the world and learning about other cultures and countries. Your involvement builds understanding and goodwill around the globe."

For the first time, Field Day will be open to participation by amateurs throughout the Americas and the Caribbean.

The President's letter acknowledged ham radio's "important role in emergency communications, assisting law enforcement personnel and other emergency services as they carry out their responsibilities."

Join Us At the RARS Dinner

Every 4th Tuesday, 6:30 pm at Fat Daddy's on Glenwood Ave.

SKYWARN

The Central Carolina Skywarn Net Meets Tuesday at 9:15 PM on 146.88 Repeater

Remember to give damage reports AFTER the storms as well as DURING the storms.

HAMFEST CALENDAR

July 20:	**Cary**
Aug.30/Sept 1:	**Shelby**
Sept 28-29:	**Virginia Beach**
October 5:	**Rock Hill, SC**
October 12*:	**Stafford, VA**
October 13:	**Maysville, NC**
October 26:	**Sumter, SC**

SOUTHEASTERN REPEATER ASSOCIATION SERA MEMBER

Courtesy of the SERA Repeater Journal

MINUTES FOR THE GENERAL MTG.
Tuesday, July 2, 2002

Vice President Robert Breyer K1RCB called the meeting to order at 7:32 PM.
Four visitors were recognized.

Treasurer's Report (Greg Seamster KE4PAX): There are currently 327 members.

Announcements:

K1RCB gave an update on recruiting efforts for the MS-150.

Neal Fisher N4HAF summed up the Field Day. Scored 10,372 total points. Offered special recognition and thanks to the following: Jim & Beth Carroll for their hospitality (use of their property); the great food; Band Captains (40m phone WA4BPJ; 15m phone K4HF; 20m CW KG4CXY; 20m/80m digital W4TMC; 20m/80m phone NI4S; 10m phone W2BYB; 40m CW N4HAF).

Chuck Littlewood K4HF gave a special Nominating Committee report. Liz Stanley KF4UQZ has resigned as Net Manager. The nominating committee will accept recommendations from any member for new Net Manager. Nominating committee will make their recommendation at the next general meeting in August, and a special election will be held at the September general meeting. K4HF read a thank you note from Carl King KU4HM and his wife Harriette KF4SER, thanking the members for the donation to the American Cancer Society in the name of their daughter.

Program: Andy Peterson NI4S gave a presentation on contesting.

K4HF introduced John Covington W4CC, the ARRL NC Section Manager, who offered a few words.

Gary Pearce KN4AQ thanked everyone who participated in the Lowe's Hurricane Awareness Fair on Saturday Jun 29.

Door prizes won by AC4ZO, WA2UZO, and KD4ISC.

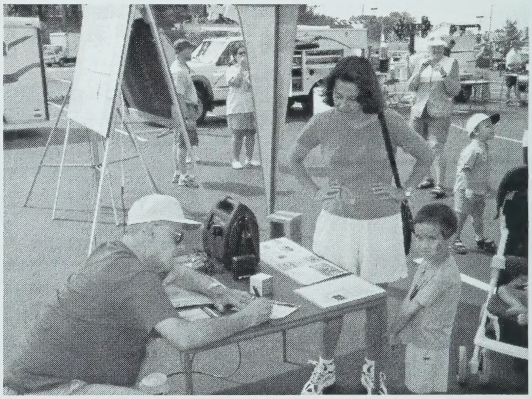
Meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Jim Walter KG4FIJ, Secretary.

HURRICANE PREPARDNESS FAIR

The Triangle Chapter of the American Red Cross partnered with Lowes Home Improvement Warehouse to present the Wake County Hurricane Preparedness Fair on Saturday, June 29, at the Lowes store on Glenwood Avenue in Raleigh.

Bob KG4IZA prepared traffic forms and asked people stopping by if they'd like to send a free message, and help hams practice sending message traffic. We sent a total of 12 pieces of traffic. This mom and son walked next door and watched as Maury AG4QZ fired the traffic off to Jeff AC4ZO. Maury is a recent graduate of the RARS license class (zooming up to Extra before the end of the class) and the area on-air Traffic Training. Jeff said he did a flawless job sending the message. More pictures on the Hurricane Preparedness Fair on the back page.



Bob KG4IZA

TRAFFIC HANDLING

In the September exciter we will have an announcement of upcoming advance traffic handling.

RALEIGHRAGHEW.NET
Wednesday 9:30 145.19

Preliminary Numbers from Field Day

By Neal N4HAF

Operated 7 transmitters, plus a 6 meter station. Modes were SSB, CW and PSK31
Total contacts was 3,481 in which 1004 CW, 151 PSK31, and 2,326 on SSB.

Total points 9,272, (including 1,100 bonus points). Last years winner in 7A scored 12,150 and the runner up was below 10,000, so I would say we did fairly well this year. Congratulations to the 40 mtr phone station which had the largest number of contacts at 1,235.

Everyone had a great time and I'm sure some of us learned valuable lessons such as: 1: Be sure you have your ladder line connected to the antenna before you hoist it 50 feet in the air, and operate for 7 hours. 2: Make sure the connections are made to the tank on the Porta-John when it's delivered as members shoes are expensive, and RARS assumes no liability for wet shoes.

TUNE IN THE
RARS NEWS HOUR

- **Newsline**
- **ARRL Audio News**

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August, 2002
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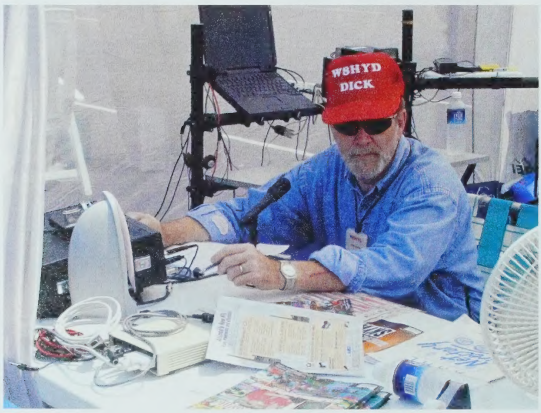
HURRICANE PREPARDNESS FAIR AT LOWES

Photos by Dave KF4VXJ

The Triangle Chapter of the American Red Cross partnered with Lowes Home Improvement Warehouse, see story on page 10.



Dick W8HYD

ARES SETUP